



**Maya Angelou (1928—2014)** was so many things — poet, dancer, singer, actress, scholar, author, activist. She was born (Marguerite Ann Johnson) in St. Louis. At an early age, she went to Stamps, Arkansas to live with her grandmother. Her nickname “Maya” came from her older brother, Bailey. When she returned briefly to her mother’s care at the age of seven, she was raped by her mother’s boyfriend. He was later jailed and then killed when he was released from jail. Maya believed her confession about the rape had a hand in his death, so she became mute for six years. She again lived with her grandmother into her teens.

Her achievements throughout her life are legendary, from being the first African American woman to work as a streetcar conductor in San Francisco to enormous sales of her autobiography, *I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS*; to spoken volumes of her poetry, to deliverance of her poem “ON THE PULSE OF MORNING” at President Clinton’s inauguration; to a professorship at Wake Forest; to the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Obama. And these are only a few of her achievements. One of her best-known quotes is: “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

#### **BOOKS FOR THE FAMILY:**

**WHO WAS MAYA ANGELOU?** Ellen Labrecque (Author). Who HQ (Author). Dede Putra (illustrator) Penguin Young Readers. 2016 (6-10 years) This book gives historical background, as well as specifics on Maya as a poet.

**STILL, I RISE: THE BIOGRAPHY OF MAYA ANGELOU (BOOK 1 OF 15 He Rose and She Rose).** Jeff Bridges. William Gladden Foundation Press. 2014 (12-18 years) This biography indicates how Maya grew past her troubled childhood and how she was influenced by Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**MAYA ANGELOU (LITTLE PEOPLE, BIG DREAMS, VOL. 4)** Lisbeth Kaiser (author), Leire Salaberria (illustrator). (4-6 years) This book indicates how Maya worked to overcome adversity and what she accomplished.

**THE COMPLETE POETRY.** Maya Angelou. Random House. 2015. This book of Maya’s poetry is a must for adults and young readers alike.

#### **VIDEOS/FILMS:**

**AMERICAN MASTERS: MAYA ANGELOU: AND STILL I RISE. 2016.**

This film weaves her own words with events in her life in a way that gives the viewers a compelling picture.

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